



Smithsonian

National Air and Space Museum

Joseph D. Mountain Collection

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Collection Overview

Repository:	National Air and Space Museum Archives
Title:	Joseph D. Mountain Collection
Date:	1916 - 1970
Identifier:	NASM.1991.0079
Creator:	Mountain, Joseph D., 1902-1970
Extent:	1.57 Cubic feet (6 boxes)
Language:	English .
Summary:	This collection follows Mountain's aviation career.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Isabel Mountain, gift, 1991, 1991-0079, NASM

Processing Information

Joseph Mountain's photographs of Saudi Arabia may be viewed online in the Archives Division's reading room, or on the Smithsonian Institution Research Information Service (SIRIS) at <http://bit.ly/dL2zDs>.

Preferred Citation

Joseph D. Mountain Collection, Acc. 1991-0079, National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

No restrictions on access

Conditions Governing Use

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Biographical Note

Joseph Dunlap Mountain was born on October 24, 1902 in Cherryvale, Kansas. He joined the U.S. Army Air Service in 1919; he was awarded his wings and commissioned a second lieutenant in 1921. Mountain continued to fly after leaving the Air Service and also took up photography.

In 1928, Mountain was employed by the Continental Air Map Company in the aerial mapping of the state of California. In 1934-1935, he served as a pilot, aerial photographer, darkroom technician and mechanic for the California-Arabian Standard Oil Company (CASOC; in 1944 renamed the Arabian American Oil Company --Aramco, now

Saudi Aramco) expedition to Saudi Arabia; Mountain logged over 221 hours of reconnaissance and mapping flights for CASOC. In 1936-1937, Mountain contracted with the Saudi Arabia Mining Syndicate to make an aerial survey of the Hejaz region of Saudi Arabia.

From 1937-1947, Mountain was a pilot for Trans World Airlines. During World War II, Mountain returned to active duty with the U.S. Army Air Forces as a training officer in the Air Transport Command. He was awarded the Bronze Star while serving in the China-Burma-India Theater and supervising supply missions over "The Hump" --the dangerous air route over the Himalaya Range. In 1945 he was promoted to full Colonel and appointed executive officer of the Committee for Air Navigation and Traffic Control.

In 1947, Mountain entered the computer industry with International Telephone and Telegraph. Later, he founded Mountain Systems, a digital computer manufacturing company, and Mountain Datasystem, a data processing firm. During the Korean War, he served as an Air Force liaison officer with the Bell Telephone Laboratories. After the war, he returned to civilian life and continued to work in the computer industry. Joseph Mountain died on November 25, 1970 at the age of 68.

Scope and Contents

This collection follows Joseph Mountain's aviation career and includes photographic negatives and prints, diaries and flight log books, reports, and maps. Mountain's photographs from his service in Saudi Arabia are of particular interest --taken not long before the great oil discoveries at Dammam in 1938, they capture the desert kingdom at the very edge of the tremendous changes that the oil economy brought to the Gulf. The images are a fascinating record of traditional Saudi Arabian life, crafts and architecture. Highlights include portraits of dancers at Eid al-Fitr celebrations, market scenes in Hufuf and the Old Town of Al Jubail, camel caravans, Saudi hunters with their hawks, and pearl fishermen and their dhows. Mountain also extensively photographed members of the CASOC team at work and interacting with their Saudi workers and acquaintances.

Joseph Mountain's negatives are stored in the Archive Division's cold vault and are not available to researchers. Scans of the negatives may be viewed in the Archives Division reading room, or through the Smithsonian Institution Research Information System (SIRIS) web site at <http://bit.ly/dL2zDs>.

Arrangement

No series - arranged by materials: Documents, oversize and images

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

- Aerial photography
- Aeronautics
- Aeronautics, Commercial -- United States
- Aeronautics, Military
- Cartography

Types of Materials:

- Correspondence
- Diaries

Maps
Photographs
Publications

Names:

Arabian American Oil Company
Mountain, Joseph D., 1902-1970

Places:

Saudi Arabia

Container Listing

Box 1, Folder 1	Affidavits of Joseph Mountain's birth
Box 1, Folder 2	Passport, Licenses, etc.
Box 1, Folder 3	Diaries of Joseph Mountain, 1942-1944, 1945
Box 1, Folder 4	Pages from Joseph Mountain's diary, 1950-1960
Box 1, Folder 5	Air Reserves material
Box 1, Folder 6	Documents pertaining to Col. Joseph Mountain
Box 1, Folder 7	Miscellaneous personal documents
Box 1, Folder 8	Mountain Systems Inc.
Box 1, Folder 9	Wind simulator material, June 2, 1941
Box 1, Folder 10	Instrument Flight: Part I, Basic Airwork Training Division, Bureau of Aeronautics, U.S. Navy
Box 1, Folder 11	Articles written by Joseph Mountain, 1932 Notes: <i>"Science Finds Silver Mines in Movie Studios"</i> February 26, 1932 <i>"Beware the Motor Oil GYPS"</i> May 13, 1932 <i>"The Switch Engine of the Air"</i> <i>"Practical Exposure and Development"</i> Miscellaneous Notes
Box 1, Folder 12	Newspaper clippings, 1926-1956
Box 2, Folder 1; Box 2, Folder 2	Original photographs from CASOC expedition, 1934-1935 Image(s) Image(s)
Box 2, Folder 3; Box 2, Folder 4; Box 2, Folder 5; Box 2, Folder 6	Prints from CASOC expedition, 1934-1935 Image(s) Image(s) Image(s) Image(s)
Box 2, Folder 7	Photograph captions
Box 2, Folder 8	Photographs of Joseph Mountain and Isabel Mountain
Box 2, Folder 9	Miscellaneous photographs - Joseph Mountain and Audrey Mountain
Box 2, Folder 10	Articles on Saudi Arabia, 1938

Notes: *Standard Oil Bulletin*, December, 1938 *Smithsonian Magazine*,
Volume 14, Number 6, September, 1983

Box 3

[\[Oversize Box\]](#), 1916-1962

Notes:

Certificates:

- Certificates: Grade school diploma, May 26, 1916
- U.S. Army Air Service flight school, June 3, 1920
- Honorable discharge from the U.S. Army, January 27, 1921
- Appointment to the rank of Colonel, U.S. Army Air Forces, May 15, 1946
- Industrial College of the Armed Forces certificate, May 15-26, 1950
- Certificate of Retirement, U.S. Air Force, - October 31, 1962

Log books, military and civilian (8 books):

- 1. January 1920 - January 1921
- 2. March 1929 - January 1934
- 3. January 1934 - December 1937
- 4. November 1934 - January 1938
- 5. November 1937 - November 1939
- 6. December 1939 - May 1943
- 7. June 1943 - September 1950
- 8. April 1946 - December 1948

Report of Aerial Reconnaissance, Saudi Arabia, 1936-1937

Box 4;

Original negatives from CASOC expedition, 1934-1935

Box 5

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

Roll TUBE C0603

Locations of photographs, Saudi Arabia, 1934, 1936